A Summative Review of Leadership Technology in Education

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Career and Leadership Goals

I’m actually five years into my third career. I have spent 33years in the U.S. Army and 23 years in law enforcement. After several years of retirement my wife who has taught for over 30 years suggested that I might want to work as a substitute teacher. At first my comments were a little negative but then I said I’ll try it. Five years later I’ve become a certified teacher where I teach 5th grade students U.S. History. Much of my life has been in the service of others and teaching has been one of the best jobs I have ever had. I actually enjoy interacting with the students and view this position as an adventure. I’m presently the social studies department head and one of the teacher facilitators for the district. I feel as if this has been a calling. I strive everyday to give students a positive male role model. This is something I feel many male and female students lack. For me teaching is not a job but an adventure. My reason for pursuing this degree program started off a little selfish. I always strive “to be the best I can be”. After reading several articles about implementing technology into the classroom I realize that most teachers have no idea about how to accomplish this other than allowing students to write reports. As I said earlier my reason for entering this program was a little selfish and I was not looking for a position in technology but to advance my own learning and possibly share what I have learned with my team and campus. I also see educators who are very uneasy or nervous when it comes to technology and my ultimate goal is to be the bridge that helps them to cross over into the 21st century. While many new technologies have emerged throughout history, so has the cry for educators to find meaningful ways to incorporate these technologies into the classroom (Klopfer, E., Osterweil, J., &Haas, J., 2009).

References

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Educational Technology Vision

I completely agree with The 2010 Horizon Report in regard to the direction that technology is moving. As stated in the report, technology is increasingly becoming a means for empowering students, a method for communication and socializing. Technology is impacting all of our lives, and especially the lives of students. It continues to profoundly affect the way we work, play, learn, socialize, and collaborate. I believe, as the report indicates, that technology skills are becoming critical to success in almost every arena and those who are more facile with technology will advance while those without access or skills will not. I think that as educators it is our responsibility to prepare our students for what lies ahead. However in order to prepare our students it is crucial that we prepare ourselves. I further believe that it would be very difficult to teach students these new emerging skills if we have not prepared ourselves. We must expose these new technologies to our students as soon as possible. I also believe that if we as educators fail to prepare ourselves we will become obsolete. I can also visualize a time when each student will have access their own personal electronic tutor. It will be a tutor that is specifically programmed for that student. This electronic device will be connected wirelessly to other devices such as cell phones and even game systems. I can also see a time when each student’s desk is connected to a wireless learning system that is controlled by a teacher. This system can also view multiple students’ progress as they listen and interact to a lesson. Maybe it will be possible one day for students to be placed in a learning chamber where all information is electronically sent to the students’ helmets. According to David Jakes (2003), virtual learning environments , when supported by sound instructional models and when combined with the content of the web, can provide an opportunity to integrate multiple types of unique web resources into the learning experience.

Self-Evaluation

I consider myself to be a digital immigrant (Warlick, 2007). I grew up with a pen or pencil but learned to use a computer and keyboard mainly due to my work. I enjoy using technology and never wanted to be a digital dinosaur so I began to teach myself about this world of technology. According to Prensky (2001), “Digital Immigrant teachers assume that learners are the same as they have always been, and that the same methods that worked for the teachers when they were students will work for their students now.” I have learned that I can find many new ways to prepare my students for the 21st century by preparing myself. I have a very good understanding of myself. I really don’t enjoy reading. I actually find it boring. However I will if it is necessary and if it will accomplish my goals. Probably because of my personal style of learning. As far as attitudes are concerned I tend to be a little critical of myself and others. I constantly strive to understand that we are all individuals and I should practice tolerance because I do realize that everyone is different. Many times leaders have to be flexible in order to get things done. The key is to strive for quality. I always have high expectations for myself and I enjoy learning new skills. I enjoy teaching and sharing the new skills I have learned while studying at Lamar. I have learned many new skills in technology and my first course at Lamar taught me something that I had wondered about for at least two years. I usually have a very good attitude and I believe that I have excellent leadership skills, mainly because I have spent over 40 years learning and practicing them in the U.S .Army and law enforcement. I learned to lead by example.

EDLD 5366 Graphic Design and Desktop Publishing

I found the digital graphics course to be very engaging. I enjoyed the hands on approach and I learned the theory behind creating a good newsletter. It was like publishing a major magazine. I basically learned what it takes to produce a quality newsletter and I was introduced to several examples of a good newsletter. When you pick up a magazine or newsletter you never think about the work it took to produce it. In this course I learned about basic design principles such as contrast, repetition, alignment and proximity. First basic principle is contrast and according to this article contrast is the single most important element in a design (Yearwood, 2009). I really enjoyed creating the newsletter. I taught what I learned to my team, and we created a social studies newsletter for the 5th grade. The only negative comment that I have is the coach for the course at the time was not very helpful when I was having a technical issue. I finally spoke with the professor and my issue was finally addressed.

EDLD 5368 Instructional Design

When I think back on instructional design, the readings were helpful and informative but at times the lessons were very stressful. The online lesson was to create a course in schoology. At times the course was very frustrating because of the lack of information that was available at the time. The information was useful and another tool that can be considered when looking at educational technology. I really cannot see a school district embracing this concept. This approach might be helpful or useful in the private sector for long distance corporate training. I shared schoology with my team and asked them what value they could find for the use of this program. I think the main purpose of instructional design, as I see It, is to maximize the effectiveness, efficiency and appeal of instruction (Kurich, 2006).

Reflections Chapter V Iste’s Week 3

Chapter 5 of this section addresses the contributions technology can make to student learning. According to the authors, students benefit indirectly when educators use technology to enhance their own productivity and professional practice (Redish, T., & Williamson, J.,). I think one of my reasons for engaging in this course at Lamar is to help other educators in the use of technology. There are still educators who are nervous when it comes to technology and there is very little training or professional development in technology. It is still the responsibility of the individual educator to provide the necessary education that they need to enhance learning of their students. I think this text should be required reading for all technology facilitators. Reading the chapters in this book has been very helpful and will be useful for not only facilitators but anyone who is interested in learning how to bring technology to their campus and district. I have also seen the tools that are available to educators to aid in productivity such as grade book. I think this is a great resource.

Chapter VI Reflections Week 3

Social, Ethical, and Human Issues

I do believe that it is very important that all students have access to a quality education. There are many reasons for the lack of technology in under privileged schools but the main issue, in my opinion, is money and priorities. The other reason is politics. “One of the most convincing arguments for technology-supported learning in the classroom, and political actions” (Redish, T & Williamson, J, 2009). The only way that I can see true equity in education throughout the state of Texas is when we have a state board of education and all funds are shared equality. As far as privacy is concerned, it is up to all of us to make sure that privacy is maintained at all times, and that we participate in ongoing professional development opportunities about privacy issues. As far as online safety is concerned, it is up to educators to teach students and parents about online safety. At the beginning of this school year I taught my students and team about safety and placed safety bulletins near all computers.